



**Maria Montessori  
Institute**



**Annual Review 2024-2025**

We are the Maria Montessori Institute. We work for a world where Montessori education is empowering the next generation to be happier, more fulfilled, and better able to make a positive difference to their family, their community, and the planet.

- We provide world-recognised Montessori teacher training and short courses for those looking to start a new career, the Montessori community, other professionals, and parents.
- We run an exemplar school in London offering the highest quality and most authentic Montessori education from two and half to 16 years.
- We champion the power of the Montessori approach at every stage of life including Montessori for dementia, disability, and ageing.
- We run targeted Montessori initiatives to support children in the UK and around the world.



*Hampstead Upper Elementary children performing in their Summer play – Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. All props and scenery are made by the children.*

# 2024-2025 Highlights

- 723 people attended one of our courses this year and 185 children attended our school.
- We awarded bursaries to those in financial need – student bursaries totalled £66,000 and school bursaries totalled £352,000.
- As well as our annual AMI Diploma 3-6 courses and Foundation Degree we continued our AMI Diploma 0-3 which commenced in July 2024 and completed our AMI Diploma 6-12 which commenced in May 2023.
- We delivered eight AMI Orientation courses, attracting students from around the world.
- We launched new courses – the AMI Montessori Administrators Certificate, the AMI Montessori Sports Fundamentals Certificate and Montessori and Learning Differences: A Neurodevelopmental Approach.
- Our school Ofsted inspection rating was Good, and we were deemed Outstanding in the areas of Behaviour and Attitudes, Early Years Provision and Personal Development.
- We engaged deeply with our school parent community with parents coming into school for classroom observations, lesson presentations and Special Visitor's Day, as well as a parents' garden party evening event.
- Our adolescent community at Hampstead continued to grow with extensive building work increasing available space and the addition of “The Lodge”, an art and design studio and garden workshop.
- The Upper Elementary children from both Hampstead and Bayswater went on a three-day overnight camping trip to Acorn Woodland Adventures.
- Young people from our Adolescent Class organised their own trips including a 10-day Odyssey trip which them camping at a farm near Oxford, plus a visit to a Montessori school in Madrid where they met with Spanish students from a Montessori school.



*A child demonstrating the 3- period language lesson to her family member using fruit themed flash cards in Mandarin at Special Visitor's Day*

- We supported wider access to the Montessori approach by providing training and mentoring support to teachers in East Africa and developing countries.
- We raised awareness of Montessori in the UK through social media campaigning, digital promotion and working with print, broadcast and online media and providing comment on research and topical issues. We also gave talks at events and online on issues relevant to Montessori education.
- We offered from Montessori in the Home courses free of charge to 265 parents, carers and professionals, supporting many more families to adopt a Montessori approach to parenting.
- We took steps to improve our environmental sustainability through our approaches to building management, locally sourced food and supporting the Healthy School Streets scheme by continuing to encourage our families to walk to school.



# Our Training Centre

We are the only UK training centre to offer the world-recognised Association Montessori Internationale courses, evolved from those delivered by Maria Montessori herself. We also offer a degree in Montessori Pedagogy, professional development for Montessori teachers and short courses introducing Montessori for all age levels from birth to older age.

## 2024-25 Training Highlights

Our online courses continued to attract students from around the UK and across the world and 414 people attended our AMI Orientation (formerly Assistants Certificate) and other short courses.

We held regular online information sessions with trainers for prospective students; 590 people registered for a session and many of these went on to train with us.

As well as our annual AMI Diploma 3-6 and Foundation Degree intake in September, we continued our AMI Diploma 0-3 which commenced in July 2024 and completed the second year of our new blended format AMI Diploma 6-12 which commenced in May 2023.

This year we ran new courses for the first time, widening our offer for the Montessori sector. These courses included the AMI Montessori Administrators Certificate which provides a thorough grounding in Montessori school management for school leaders and administrators; and the AMI Montessori Sports Fundamentals Certificate which provides training in delivering sport and physical movement activities within a Montessori environment. As well as the Montessori and Learning Differences: A Neurodevelopmental Approach course which we piloted the year before.

## Course Bursaries

Many students in need of financial assistance benefited from assisted and full fee relief.

The first Ellie Kempley scholarship student graduated from the 3-6 Diploma course in June 2025. Two other students received 50% bursaries from the Maria Montessori Institute for the 3-6 Diploma.

Six students on the 6-12 Diploma course each received a contribution towards the fees. One student on the 0-3 Diploma course received a 50% bursary. One student received the Hilla Patell bursary award for the Post Diploma MMI Observation course. Staff received significantly discounted fees on our AMI Diploma, AMI Orientation, AMI Sports Fundamentals, Montessori and Learning Differences and Montessori for Dementia, Aging and Disability courses.



*Two 0-3 Diploma students practicing pouring. One plays the child and the other the teacher in this scenario*

# Training Centre Inspection

The training centre was inspected by Mainland Inspection in January 2025. The report found:

- Teaching, learning and assessment are of high quality and continue to be planned and delivered by the same team of very experienced and expert tutors.
- Recent research work by the Head of Training has enabled aspects of educational neuroscience to be incorporated into the child development aspect of the course.
- Students say they value the close personal support given by tutors and the staff of their school and nursery placements.
- The cultural and moral development of students is an integral part of Montessori training and the college amply fulfils this standard.

## AMI Diploma Courses

52 students studied for AMI Diplomas, the internationally renowned course that qualifies students as Montessori teachers/ practitioners. We ran 3-6 Diploma Courses in the following formats: One Year Day, Two Year Day and Two Year Evening. The pass rate of 3-6 Diploma students graduating this year was 87%. In 2025-26, for the first time we additionally offered an AMI Diploma 3-6 modular Blended Study format.

The new AMI Diploma 6-12 Blended Study format that commenced in May 2023 completed this year. The delivery of our AMI Diploma 6-12 began in October 2025 and will evolve this format to best support students and this course will include 18 weeks on-site and a differently calibrated online component.

## Degree in Montessori Pedagogy (AMI 3-6)

Three students graduated with our Foundation Degree, run in partnership with the University of East London. Our degree students study over two years and gain the AMI Diploma 3-6 as well having the option of an additional third year of study to gain a BA Hons in Early Childhood and Montessori Pedagogy. Students can access UK student loan funding for the degree course.

## Montessori for Dementia, Disability and Ageing

In January 2025, we ran a two day in-person workshop on how a Montessori approach can transform the lives of older people and those living with dementia or disabilities. This was an open course aimed at professionals in the care sector and family members caring for relatives attended by 30 people. We also delivered an in-house bespoke course to 40 employees of Essex Council. The course content and audience for the course were expanded to include the approach for those with disabilities in 2023-24.



*“Every challenging moment of the training is worth it when you witness that spark of discovery in a child’s eyes, knowing that you’ve created an environment where their natural love of learning can flourish.”*

*Aisha Offeh, BA Hons Early Childhood with Montessori Pedagogy Graduate*

## AMI Orientation and Assistants Adjunct Courses

Eight AMI Orientation courses took place with two courses online at the 0-3 and 3-6 year levels; three online at the 6-12 year level; and one online at the 12-18 year level. These courses are aimed at parents, classroom assistants and anyone seeking an introduction to Montessori at a specific stage of development. The online format means they were accessible in the UK and across the world - in total, 205 people attended AMI Orientation courses during the academic year. 10 students attended our AMI Assistants Adjunct 3-6 which includes online sessions and a practice component.

## AMI Montessori Administrators Certificate

We were delighted to run this course for the first time in April 2025. The course was developed for anyone working in an administrative or leadership role at a Montessori school and looks at topics including strategic planning; how to build a positive school community; and core pedagogical Montessori principles.



3-6 Graduation 2025



6-12 Graduation 2025



## 0-3 Graduation 2025

### Montessori and Emotional Wellbeing

These courses use the latest research and Montessori approaches to enable teachers and parents to support children's emotional wellbeing. We ran two courses: one tailored for the needs of Montessori teachers attended by 15 Montessori educators and one specifically for parents, attended by 16 parents, grandparents, and carers.

### AMI Refreshers and Professional Development

We held in-person AMI Refreshers courses, including a 3-6 AMI Refresher called *"Psycho-sensorial Education and the Development of the Intelligence"*. This two-day event for Montessori teachers was attended by 69

people including our staff and people from other schools. 6-12 teachers were invited to join this Refresher and also attend an additional session on handcrafts.

Following the success of the 3-6 AMI Refresher, we ran a stand-alone on-line course on Psycho-Sensorial Education over four online sessions with a Mandarin Chinese translation option. This was attended by 22 people.



*Teachers take time to observe children carefully and check in with them to provide emotional support for their wellbeing.*

## MMI Observation Course – Post Diploma

Our MMI Observation Course is a Post Diploma course for Montessori teachers at the 3-6 years stage and offers a unique professional development opportunity. We offered several bursaries on this course including a bursary in memory of Hilla Patell and a recent graduate bursary. In 2025-26 have launched the course in a new format to offer greater accessibility

and the opportunity for ongoing development with modules open to graduates of the original course.

## Montessori and Learning Differences: A Neurodevelopmental Approach

Our course focused on Montessori and learning differences piloted in 2023-24 and received excellent feedback. The course looks at how and understanding of how the brain learns and Montessori's focus on the individual's potential can be uniquely combined to support children with learning differences including autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and dyspraxia and is especially for Montessori teachers at the 3-6 years level. Students who took part in this in-depth professional development opportunity benefitted from the latest neuroscientific understanding of neurodevelopmental differences. The course runs over an academic year during which participants focus on a case study in their school and discuss approaches with their fellow students.



*Montessori and Learning Differences students.*

# AMI Montessori Sports Fundamentals Certificate

This AMI-accredited course launched at the Maria Montessori Institute for the first time in April 2025. The course is suitable for Montessori teachers, parents, sports coaches, and mainstream educators. On the course students reflect on the delivery of sports education and how this can be approached from a Montessori perspective with a focus on cooperative and child-led activities for children of all ages.

## Beyond the UK

Our courses continued to attract students from around the world both online and in-person. Our trainers also worked directly with other countries, acting as examiners and mentors, and delivering presentations and training. They worked in countries including Ethiopia, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria, South Africa, Sri Lanka, China, Greece, and Tanzania.



# Our School

Our exemplar school in London offers the highest-quality and authentic Montessori education for 2- 16-year-olds. We nurture independence and creativity, promoting hands-on and joyful learning. Our children follow their interests and gain a lifelong love of learning. This year we celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and 185 children were enrolled in the school.

## The School's Ofsted Inspection

The School's latest Ofsted rating is Good following an inspection in June 2025, where we achieved Outstanding in the areas of Behaviour and Attitudes, Early Years Provision and Personal Development. The Ofsted report found:

- Children and pupils at this school thrive in a culture of respect, responsibility and genuine collaboration. Pupils are polite and friendly towards each other, to adults and to visitors.
- The school ensures that pupils experience a broad, rich and ambitious curriculum. This is underpinned by following children's interest and curiosity, while ensuring that specific key skills and concepts are taught across a range of subjects.
- Through learning activities and opportunities, pupils' independence and responsibility for their learning are explicitly promoted. In all phases, teachers skilfully model the learning before expecting pupils to independently and deliberately practice the concepts taught.
- Proprietor oversight and governance arrangements are robust. Those responsible for governance are well informed, make decisions in the best interests of the pupils and hold the school to account. Staff enjoy working here and feel well supported and well cared for.



## School Bursaries

Many children benefited from assisted and full fee relief, enabling families in need of financial assistance to attend our school. 30 children received a full bursary or benefitted from assisted fees.



*A child re-arranging the sandpaper letters in the Children's House.*

## Communicating with Our Parent Community

Regular email communication from the Head of School engaged all families within our school community. We also offered parent information sessions for all age groups, and our new website now offers greatly extended information about our programmes at each stage of development. The My Montessori Child platform, designed specifically for Montessori schools, enables us to regularly share observations and photos with parents in the Children's House. Work is underway to provide a similar platform for children and parents at the Elementary level. The Board met with parents in June to discuss a variety of issues including the financial situation regarding the school and its future.

Parents also had several opportunities to come into the school to learn more about their children's day-to-day experience in the community. This included classroom observations and "pop-up presentations" where teachers gave presentations or lessons in the same way as they are offered to the children, enabling parents to experience the Montessori work cycle and work with the materials as an active participant. Parents were also invited into the school for Special Visitor's Day where the children were able to share their personal work and demonstrate the presentations they had received.



An Elementary teacher demonstrating the “Checker Board”, a concrete visual representation of long multiplication.

*“Pupils demonstrate incredibly high levels of independence and curiosity, in both academic learning and in developing skills for life.”*  
**OFSTED**



*A child working with the Sound Boxes in the Children’s House.*

# Adolescent Programme

Our new Adolescent Community was established in 2023 and is continuing to grow. Works took place in the 2024 summer holidays to convert the administrative office into further accommodation for the Adolescent class and to reconfigure the staff and adolescent kitchens. A new external space in the garden, now called 'The Lodge', has been further refurbished to become an arts studio, design and garden workshop. We are continuing to look for affordable premises to allow for the future expansion of the adolescent class.

## School Trips

A key feature of our Adolescent community includes a residential "Odyssey" trip early in the Autumn term which fosters independence, connection with nature and a community bond. This year the Adolescent Community participated in a 10-day camping trip to a farm near Oxford for their Odyssey Trip. The students from the previous year had chosen the site and prepared all the logistics including preparation for buying and cooking their meals. The students engaged in their surroundings and were involved in practical opportunities for learning, including participating in the life of the farm.

The young people also organised their own trip to Spain where they met with Montessori students attending the Montessori School of Madrid. The trip was an opportunity to learn about Spanish culture and practice their Spanish language skills.



Their production followed extensive research into the ecological implications of soap production and a variety of soap production methods.

## IGCSE Qualifications

To give the widest possible choice of sixth form study to our children, we will be offering all the Adolescent class the possibility of attaining IGCSE qualifications. We offer support in taking Mathematics, English Literature, English Language, Spanish, Humanities, Geography and Double Science which includes Chemistry, Physics and Biology. The day will be extended to encompass specialists who can guide the children. This will allow us to continue to offer the integrated wide range of student-led studies that a Montessori Adolescent programme offers, alongside the IGCSE syllabuses.



*The Adolescent (12-18 years) class working.*



# Other School Highlights

## School Community Events

The school community came together for many wonderful events throughout the year. A new parent welcome soiree in September was received as well as the parents' Garden Soirée. We also held our third whole-school annual picnic in Primrose Hill Park in May. The event was very well attended with children and parents coming from all school sites.

## Garden Developments

A new design for the garden and the front of the building was commissioned. We are working towards a staged implementation of the plans that will involve fundraising. A gardener was engaged to work on restoring the garden. Following our fundraiser for the Permaculture Garden, in high summer the garden was in full bloom and filled with vegetables, fruits, and edible flowers planted by the children.

## After School Activities

The range of after-school activities offered at Bayswater and Hampstead are wide-ranging and were verbally commended by the Ofsted Inspectors. We planned to launch an afterschool choir beginning in Autumn 2025.



A Lower Elementary (6-9 years) child shovelling soil from a wheelbarrow into the flower bed in the garden at Hampstead.

### Upper Elementary School Trip

The Upper Elementary children from both Hampstead and Bayswater went on a three-day overnight camping trip to Acorn Woodland Adventures. Their days were filled with climbing, caving, team building activities, and a trip to the Safari Park. The children and teachers returned both enthusiastic and exhausted!

### Language Programmes

We embarked on the fourth year of our Spanish Language Programme and our Notting Hill bilingual English-Mandarin Programme. These offer the children exposure, exploration, and sensitization to a second language at a key stage in language development, with the goal of gradually building confidence and an appreciation for learning additional languages.

### Summer Performances

The Upper and Lower Elementary classes at Hampstead each put on a summer performance for parents in the garden. The plays this year were A Series of Short Plays based on Greek Myths and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

### Sports Day

Sports Day for all Bayswater and Hampstead Elementary children took place at Parliament Hill in July. The day was led by the Highgate Rangers Coaches. The children were mixed into teams and engaged in activities such as the Long Jump, 50 Metre Relay, a Potato Sack Race, and more. Parents were invited to join in the activities for the final hour of the day.



*Tug of war at Sports Day 2025*



*Children painting outlines of their bodies in the style of Keith Harin.*

# Outreach

We ran targeted Montessori initiatives to support children in disadvantaged communities in the UK and overseas, while our marketing, communications and campaigning activity took Montessori to a wider audience.

## Corner of Hope

Our Corner of Hope project is an Educateurs sans Frontières initiative run in conjunction with AMI supporting children from vulnerable communities in Kenya including those in what was an Internally Displaced Persons camp, the Samburu Nomadic people and the people in the remote region of Pokot. The project gives these children access to education by training teachers and setting up schools and traveling schools. Two members of our staff are on the Board of the not-for-profit NGO Montessori for Kenya.

This year one of our 0-3 trainers Beverley Maragh was supported by AMI to visit each of the sites and hold workshops for families on the importance of the first three years of life.

Six members of staff have trained and acted as examiners on AMI Diploma 3-6 courses running in African countries. Bimpe Pogoson completed her first 3-6 Diploma course in Nigeria and began a second in the summer of 2024. Vikki Taylor completed a 3-6 course in Tanzania and will start another in July 2025. Lynne Lawrence continued to support the 'Help the Children' projects in Kenya and work in Tanzania. She has also been involved in designing an 'emergency response' initiative in South Africa with MMI graduate Jennifer Moore.

## Montessori in the Home

We offered our Montessori in the Home training as part of our outreach work enabling more parents and professionals to use a Montessori approach with children in their care. We targeted the programme to those who would not otherwise be able to afford to train with us and 265 parents, carers and professionals attended online courses – one course was focused on the 0-3 years stage and one on the 3-6 years stage.



*Montessori in the Home: two young sisters clean the inside and outside of their parent's car*

## UK Taxation of Private School Fees

We responded to the UK Government's decision to put a Value Added Tax of 20% on all private school fees by speaking out to the media and supporting the court case against the Government mounted by Simon Nathan (CEO) of the Independent Schools Council and their solicitors, Kingsley Napley LLP, represented by Lord Pannick. Although the court agreed that the tax was discriminatory to parents who cannot access their educational choices in the state system, given the amount of money the Government is predicting could be raised, they were considered to be able to levy the tax.

We are continuing to lobby for further consideration of the issue by working with the Department of Education, the Secretary of State for Education, and MPs including local MP Tulip Siddiq. Additionally, we are looking to engage with Her Royal Highness Princess Catherine of Wales who is active in the early years field.

## Speaking out for Montessori

Lynne Lawrence spoke in Colombia, Mexico, and the USA, including talking about our Born Inside work with mothers in prisons. She spoke at a conference in China on Children, Constancy and Change. Louise Livingston gave a talk on Montessori, Neuroscience, and the Call for a Paradigm Shift in Education – at the Annual China Conference in Shenzhen. Louise is also a regular contributor to the [AMI Research Threads](#) videos. Bimpe Pogoson is now on the Montessori Society board and wrote an article about the Decanomial Square for the Montessori Society magazine and recorded a Voices of AMI Trainers video.



# Increasing Awareness of Montessori

We raised awareness of Montessori and our work with promotional campaigns online and by targeting media including national, parenting and sector outlets. Our social media campaigns reached 1.5 million people. Our Google search (organic and paid advertising) resulted in 120,495 visits to our website.

Our communications work supported high numbers at open days and online information sessions with 1091 people registering for one of these events. 583 people registered for our online trainer Q&A sessions which were held throughout the year and open to the general public, and those thinking of studying with us.

Visits to our training centre and school were also arranged for those considering our AMI Diploma courses. 508 prospective parents registered for in-person school tours, and we also offered classroom observations and parent talks which were also open to current parents and covered topics such as 'Raising a Multilingual Child' and 'The Progression of Cubing from the Children's House to the Elementary'.



We published blogs and comment on topical issues in the education and Montessori sectors on our website and disseminated these via the media, emails to our database and social media. These articles engaged both those new to Montessori and our community.

We also used case studies of Diploma and Degree graduates to attract more people to train with us.

## New Website

Work on our new website was completed and the site launched in February 2025. This project was a huge undertaking as the content, design, structure, and functionality of the site was reimagined and rebuilt from scratch. A web agency was engaged to deliver the design and technical aspects of the site and our marketing and communications staff created and uploaded new content and application and booking forms.

We believe the new site is vibrant and engaging and much better expresses the value of the Montessori approach. Anecdotal feedback is very positive, and the site will continue to develop over time.



Two Elementary (6-12 years) children working with a Maths material.

# Staff Professional Development

As a school and training provider we are uniquely placed to give our staff unprecedented opportunities for mentoring and professional development as well as supporting professional development from other academic institutions. The skills and expertise gained by our teachers and trainers impact on their work in the classroom and training centre.

Our teaching staff attended our AMI Refresher Course "*Psycho-sensorial Education and the Development of the Intelligence*". Elementary staff attended an additional Refresher session on Handcrafts. *All school staff spent an inset day in February focusing on the creative arts and specifically music and drama.*

All trainers and school staff were given the opportunity to attend our new course: "Montessori and Learning Differences – A Neurodevelopmental Approach" and eleven members of staff attended.

Some staff attended AMI Orientation courses at the 3-6 year, 6-12 year, and 12-18 year levels.

Seven staff are in the Training of Trainers programme; three staff at the 3-6 years level, one at 0-3 years; and two at 6-12 years. One person is in the Training of Trainers programme at the Ageing and Dementia level. Lizzie Kingston has achieved AMI Auxiliary Trainer status.

Our Director of Training Louise Livingston continues with her PhD in Educational Neuroscience at UCL's Institute of Education on the subject of Montessori, movement and executive function and has submitted her thesis. This has given Louise the opportunity to expand her understanding of the neuroscience of learning and has opened many opportunities for speaker engagements and also the creation of the new Montessori and Learning Differences course. This is part funded by the organisation.

Another member of staff was supported by the organisation to complete a PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education) Primary Early Years Initial Teacher Education at the University of the West of England.



*Staff taking part in professional development days and courses such as our AMI Refreshers.*



# Sustainability

We endorse the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 4 which recognises the rights of all children to a quality education and the need for many more trained teachers to help fulfil this right. We also actively encourage all staff, children and students to recognise the need to protect our planet.

## Sustainable Development Goals

We advocate for the right of all children to a quality education by increasing the number of teachers and adults trained to deliver child-centred Montessori education and in particular to expand ways of delivering education to those who have the least opportunities to access it. We do this not only through our teacher training and school but also by our commitment to offering teaching bursaries, training and teaching expertise to our historical partners in East Africa and other developing countries.



*A Lower Elementary (6-9 years) teacher leading a geometry lesson on weight and volume of objects*

Target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals is particularly relevant to our work: *“By 2030 ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote.....sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”*

The AMI Montessori programme promotes all these areas and is known worldwide as an approach that embodies ‘education for peace’. The integrated syllabus of studies combines knowledge of the earth’s processes and the interdependencies of life for a sustainable planet and underpins the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.



*A child pouring water from a jug to a watering can, to water a plant in the Children’s House (3-6 years)*

## Environmental Sustainability

Whilst limited by some of our sites being located in leased premises and the Head office and largest school site occupying a Victorian listed building, we have endeavoured to minimise energy loss by refurbishing the windows and doors, committing green energy wherever possible and recycling all glass, paper, cardboard and plastic.

All of the Montessori materials in our school and training environments are made from natural materials, and we have a repair rather than replace policy.

Our in-house catering team at Hampstead buys locally sourced and seasonal produce and staff are working with the children in our school to grow fruit and vegetables for lunches.

This year, meetings were held with Ecospheric with regards to improving the 'green' and healthy credentials of the Hampstead building. Whilst bringing in natural air flow vents to the rooms will require more work than anticipated due to the listed nature of the building, there are other aspects such as lighting that could be tackled initially and more easily.



*A child working with the land and water forms material in the Children's House.*

## Financial Sustainability

This was a financially challenging year for the organisation with unprecedented pressures brought about by changes in UK tax policy including Value Added Tax on independent school fees; increases in employer's national insurance charges; and the removal of business rate relief from educational charities. These financial impositions, all levied within a budget year, had a serious effect upon our parents, children and the organisation, resulting in a loss of 23 children in the school over the period January to September 2025. This has caused multiple challenges within the organisation, which along with parents we will be working together to resolve.

# Executive Director Lynne Lawrence Awarded MBE

Our Executive Director Lynne Lawrence was awarded an MBE for services to education by HRH Prince William, on Wednesday 25th June 2025. The award is a British honour bestowed by the reigning monarch that is given to individuals who have made a significant impact on their community through their service or achievements.

Lynne Lawrence, who is also Executive Director of Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), is a world-renowned educator, author, lecturer, broadcaster, and expert on Montessori. Before becoming Executive Director of the Maria Montessori Institute and AMI, she was our Director of Training and Schools from 1989. She originally trained in Montessori in London in 1974 under Hilla Patell, worked with Muriel Dwyer on the “Help the Children” project in Kenya from 1978 onwards and supported innovative work with mothers and children deprived of their freedom, in prison. Lynne continues to advocate for underserved children around the world.



*“The recent ceremony where I received an MBE from His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, was also a moment to reflect on the debt of gratitude I owe all of my Montessori colleagues for their work, support and love over many years. The award is given to an individual but reflects everything that the Maria Montessori Institute (MMI) and AMI have achieved and the esteem in which the efforts of the broader Montessori community are held.”*

# In Memory - Richard Patridge (1955-2025)

Richard joined the Board of the Maria Montessori Institute in 2005 and served for 19 years and as Board Chair for 12 years until his retirement due to ill health in November 2024.

In the words of one of our Board members: *“He had such a cheerful and friendly personality which he always brought with him to the Board Meetings. Nor did he shy away from making the tough decisions. He was a great leveller. Often after he spoke, we were all of one accord. We were immensely fortunate to have him and all his wisdom with us. He was a man of creative vision”.*

Richard was passionate about the work of the Maria Montessori Institute as a training centre and school and worked tirelessly to support its growth. During his many years of service, he made a significant impact on the environments of both entities. As the school began to expand to accommodating children across all ages from 3-16 years and on multiple sites, Richard always brought his vision and expertise to the various new environments that were needed. His skill was to take unprepossessing and often tiny spaces and turn them into little jewels perfectly adapted for the children and adults.



During his time on the Board, he designed two entirely new environments for our Training Centre, firstly in Baker Street and then Riding House Street, where it currently resides. He also continually adapted the spaces at Lyndhurst Gardens as the demand for the School to accommodate more children increased. This included re-designing offices, classrooms and kitchens on multiple occasions – always guided by what human activity was to be supported and the effect of the aesthetic on the daily lives of the children and adults that would inhabit them.

Of all of these spaces, perhaps the ‘jewel in the crown’ was the redesign of the Lyndhurst Gardens ‘Coach House’ – a small space for 20 children within the back garden of the school, now featured in the book *Montessori Architecture*. It had such a small footprint (having been a tiny garage) such that every square centimetre had to be crafted for use and yet still capture a feeling of spaciousness and beauty. Designed on multiple levels, every area takes your breath away: the beautiful staircase, the views across levels, the tiny kitchen area, a peaceful space to read a book, space for coats, areas for small groups and individual activities, toilets, a mezzanine... All this combines with the way the building sits in the garden with views and access both into the garden and from the garden into the classroom. A large wrap around deck that the children can work on enables children to be both in nature and observing it at one and the same time.

There isn't a space at Lyndhurst Gardens that doesn't carry the imprint of Richard's brilliance, not a space that hasn't had a positive impact on the lives of hundreds of children and this fact alone, along with his vision and leadership will leave a lasting and immeasurable legacy.

Richard - thank you!



*The Coach House at Lyndhurst Gardens*

# Thank You

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to our work this year, either through philanthropy and funding, or by providing teaching practice or serving on our Board.

## Our Board Members

Mr Ben Faccini  
Writer/Consultant to UN agencies and  
NGOs

Mrs Nicola Forsyth  
Montessori Pedagogue  
Ex School Proprietor

Ms Sara Giwa-McNeil – Chair  
(November 2024) Montessori  
Pedagogue  
Ex School Proprietor

Mrs Wendy Innes Montessori  
School Proprietor

Mrs Amanda Lake  
(retired June 2024 – 15 years'  
service on the Board)  
Montessori Pedagogue  
Ex School Proprietor

Mrs Catherine Middlemas  
Montessori Pedagogue  
Ex School Proprietor

Mr David Murphy - Honorary  
Treasurer (retired June 2024)  
Finance Director

Ian Stockdale – Honorary Treasurer (June  
2024)  
Finance Director

Mr Richard Partridge – Chairman  
(retired due to ill health November  
2024)  
Architect

Ms Farran Scott  
Musician

Mrs Linda Webster  
(retired June 2024 – 16 years' service on  
the Board including Company Secretary)  
Former Primary School Teacher

Professor Carrie Weston  
Chartered Psychologist, Writer &  
Educational Consultant

Maria Montessori Institute, 26 Lyndhurst Gardens, London NW35NW

Tel: 020 7435 3646 Web: [www.mariamontessori.org](http://www.mariamontessori.org) Email: [info@mariamontessori.org](mailto:info@mariamontessori.org)

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